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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR APRIL 28-29, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for April 28-29, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

SABAH (GUNEY) / BOLGE: Cukurova University Rector Prof. Alper Akinoglu, at a ceremony held to recognize academicians who have been appointed as instructors, said that no one will be allowed to compromise the secular principles of the Turkish state.

ZAMAN / BOLGE: Adana Governor Cahit Kirac visited the Chamber of Geological Engineers (CGE). During his talks with the CGE Chairman, Kirac obtained information about the seismic movements in Adana. Kirac stated that populist policies do nothing to address the earthquake issue. He added that an Earthquake Monitoring Center will begin to operate in Adana at the end of 2005 and that his office has completed a Disaster Management Plan for Adana.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The executive officers of Egitim-Sen (Education Union) paid a visit to Tuncer Bakirhan, DEHAP (Democratic People's Party) leader, to discuss the issue of a lawsuit opened to shut down the Union.

ZAMAN / SABAH (GUNEY) / BOLGE / EKSPRES: The seven governors of the Cukurova region (Adana, Gaziantep, Mersin, Hatay, Kilis, Osmaniye, Kahramanmaraş) held a meeting at the Adana Governor's Office to discuss how to handle responsibilities that will be transferred from the Village Services Offices, which will soon be closed.

OZGUR GUNDEM / EVRENSEL: Special teams allegedly conducted a raid on a house in Hakkari on the grounds that "a wounded terrorist was hiding there." The fact that the operation was conducted with armored military vehicles and two helicopters disturbed local people and the DEHAP District Chairman in Hakkari said that close to ten houses were allegedly raided in the same fashion in a week.

BOLGE / EKSPRES: Three Deputy Chairmen of the ANAP (Motherland Party), Mirac Akdogan (Malatya deputy), Muhsin Kocyigit (Diyarbakir deputy) and Muharrem Dogan (Mardin deputy), and three members of the Party's Main Executive Board, have come to Adana attend the address of their leader in an April 30 meeting in Adana. During a press meeting, Akdogan criticized CHP's support for the new Political Parties Act, which allegedly aims to rule out the delivery of Treasury funds to parties with smaller Parliamentary groups.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Hacettepe University in Ankara is embarking upon an extensive project to conduct research on internal migration. The results obtained from the research will reportedly benefit the Chief of Staff and State Planning Institute as well.

EKSPRES: At a conference in Tehran, Iran, Adana Mayor Aytac Durak delivered a speech about his Municipality's experiences regarding the operation of local administrations in Turkey.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Kadriye Goren, a ten-year-old girl, has been operated on four times in Dicle University's Research Hospital after being hit in the eye by a bullet during a military operation in Derik district of Mardin on March 25. Her family applied to the Human Rights Association, alleging no military authority has extended help to date.

RADIKAL: Sahin Ayaz, a founding member of the Kurd-Der (Kurdish Association) and HAKPAR (Rights and Liberties Party) was reportedly taken into custody after participating in a television program. The Bursa Prosecutor's office allegedly detained Ayaz on the grounds that his talk aimed to incite hatred and hostility that would promote social class, racial, religious differences among people. Ayaz was released after submitting his statement to the Prosecutor.

OZGUR GUNDEM: During the April 23 Sovereignty and Children's Day, DEHAP Provincial Executives in Siirt were allegedly excluded from the ceremonial wreath-laying tribute paid to Ataturk's statue and from the parade held in the city stadium. This issue has been brought to the agenda of the Turkish Parliament with a question submitted by CHP Canakkale deputy Ismail Ozyay.

YENI SAFAK / HURRIYET / SABAH / EKSPRES / BOLGE / OZGUR GUNDEM:
State Minister Kursad Tuzmen stated that they would renovate the Cilvegozu Border Gate, the Turkish side of the border with Syria. The renovation activities will be governed under a Build-Operate-Transfer project. Tuzmen expressed that this effort will enhance and accelerate the trade relations with Syria.

OZGUR GUNDEM: A three-person delegation assigned by Holland, German and Switzerland has reportedly come to Turkey to conduct studies at the Iskenderun Port, where the wreckage of M/V Ulla remains. M/V Ulla, with its 2,200 tons of poisonous waste, is reportedly still negatively affecting the marine resources sector.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

1. ZAMAN / EKSPRES / BOLGE: Ali Kavak, Chairman of the Antakya Chamber of Commerce and Industry, stated that Turkish investors, attracted by the lower costs of investment inputs such as labor and electricity, have recently been seeking investment opportunities in Syria.

2. SABAH: TOBB (Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchange Offices) hosted a meeting with Israeli and Palestinian businessmen to promote joint projects and political ties through the aid of the trade partnerships. The delegations from Israel and Palestine showed interest in investment opportunities in the GAP region.

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